

Sue O'Neill will talk about RAWCS – Rotary Australia World Community Service.

1 I have been a Rotarian for 5 years. Prior to joining Rotary I was working on several overseas Humanitarian projects. It was during this time I became aware of the significant work Rotary was doing. I joined Rotary and found that so many opportunities existed to pursue my passion of working in developing countries.

2 Rotarians are kind, generous and innovative people.

Ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

There is this extensive worldwide network that we can tap in on and make amazing things happen. During my 5 years in Rotary I have been fortunate enough to make over 40 overseas projects trips either as a project volunteer or project manager.

3 This many trips and the level of involvement and level of satisfaction would not be possible without RAWCS. Rotary Australia World Community Service – RAWCS provides a wonderful structure and support network. RAWCS also provides travel insurances and tax deductibility.

Rotarians are way too secretive, we don't promote what we do and we don't market ourselves very well. As a worldwide organisation we face a decline in membership that rocks our foundations. We have lots to brag about, things that would entice new members, but we like to be quiet achievers. I want to let you in on a Rotary secret most Rotarians don't know.

4 While our membership numbers are generally declining the money going into RAWCS projects has increased by staggering amounts. RAWCS formed in 2002/2003 and that year in NSW or Eastern Region \$300,000 was processed in project donations, this current year will see over \$8million in project donations.

5 RAWCS Eastern Region incorporates 7 districts including our own 9680. Nationally this year all Australia will process in excess of \$30million into overseas projects.

6 The International projects we are involved in are just incredible, it is mind boggling what we achieve. In the last 5 years in Eastern Region we have worked on 226 projects in 48 countries plus 5 worldwide projects. In Eastern Region in the last 12 months 606 volunteers made 105 project trips in 14 different countries. Also in the last 12 months we have shipped more than 130 containers many thru our Donation in Kind warehouse.

7 The growth in RAWCS I believe is all about the level of involvement we can have in projects. When we participate in an overseas project we return with a sense of satisfaction that we have made a positive difference in the lives of others in our global community who do it really tough.

8 We can be hands on and use our skills to improve desperate and difficult situations.

9 Our volunteer project teams carry out humanitarian work around the globe. The teams conduct short term exercises, have predetermined and agreed goals, and ensure that projects be sustainable.

10 We are combating poverty, neglect, hunger, water shortages and water contamination, poor housing, inadequate medical attention and supplies, disease, discrimination, ignorance, poor reading and poor comprehension skills also a lack of schools, teachers and education.

11 The teams and the communities need ongoing support. We give that too. The projects you are hearing about today illustrate our philosophy and our actions.

12 I would like to now tell you a little about a project of the Rotary Club of Kenthurst. We supply new diagnostic medical equipment. It is basic equipment and most Doctors and nurses are familiar with the items we supply.

13 Sadly in most developing countries Hospitals and clinics do not have access to this equipment.

14 Vanimo Hospital is in Sandaun Province in Papua New Guinea. Sanduan Province sits right on the Indonesian boarder. Sadly Vanimo has some of the worst health indicators in all of PNG.

15 Lowest life expectancy and very high infant mortality. We were able to donate a couple of fetal dopplers to Vanimo. Vanimo Hospital had 1-3 babies die each month during childbirth. Since receiving the fetal dopplers in August 2011 they have not lost a baby. Each precious baby only has one life.

16 Some 2 million babies die every year on the first day of their lives, most die from preventable causes related to complications from the birthing process.

17 More than 350,000 women die annually from complications during pregnancy and childbirth, almost all 99% - in the developing world. Most of these deaths are preventable.

18 Where ever we can get our medical equipment, we see positive results. We know lives are been saved. Without RAWCS we would not be able to travel as extensively and offer as much equipment as we do.

19 As Rotarians I want you to be aware of this wonderful resource we have in RAWCS, it helps us make a difference. We are saving babies, educating children, providing clean water, preventing malaria and so much more.

20 There is a profound joy that comes from giving and making a positive difference in another person's life. We should all experience this – we have the opportunities